

COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee meeting held in the Town Council Office, Northwood House, Cowes on Tuesday 8 September 2015 at 6.15pm.

Present: Councillors McNeill (Chairman), Banks, Brown, Corby, Ellis, Hammond & Jones.

In attendance: Two members of the public.

8 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

9 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Corby declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute No 11c as he is a member of the Management Committee for Cowes T.S. Osborne Sea Cadets.

10 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Finance, Acquisitions & Staffing Committee meeting held on 7 July 2015 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

11 FINANCE

a) Cheque signatories for Cowes Town Council Bank Accounts

Councillors McNeill & Corby have now provided their details to enable the Town Clerk to progress the application to update the signatories for the Town Council Bank Accounts.

b) Procedure for making annual payments to organisations outside of the Grant Application Process.

Councillors discussed a procedure for making annual payments to three organisations outside of the grant application process – Cowes Carnival Committee, Fireworks Committee & Isle of Wight Literary Festival. It was agreed that organisations should apply through the normal grant application process but the application would stay in place for three years to give the organisers some financial stability.

RECOMMENDED

That Cowes Town Council writes to the three organisations explaining that they should make their grant application now and the application they make will stay in place for the next three years.

c) Applications for Grants

The Town Council has been asked to consider the following application for grant:

- (i) Cowes T.S. Osborne Sea Cadets – Fire & Safety Equipment - £3,000

RECOMMENDED

1. That a grant be made to the following organisation in accordance with the amount shown:

- (i) Cowes T.S. Osborne Sea Cadets – Fire & Safety Equipment - £3,250

2. That the balance in the budget of £6,550 be kept in reserve pending further applications which may be received.

12 ACQUISITIONS

a) Park Road Rose Bed

The Town Clerk reported that a letter had been sent to the Isle of Wight Council requesting that they donate the Rose Bed to Northwood House and Cowes Town Council would undertake the maintenance. To date, a reply has not been received. Work had been undertaken by a contractor, prior to Cowes Week, to weed, cut the grass and generally tidy up the area. This area is in need of further attention.

ACTION

1. The Town Clerk contacts the contractor to ask for a condition report of the roses and requests a quotation for a membrane to be put in place to stop weed growth and place bark on top.
2. That the Park Road Rose Bed be included in the tender document for a grounds maintenance contract for 2016/2017.

b) Princes Green

The Isle of Wight Council retain responsibility for Princes Green as a Principal Park but stated that they will no longer be providing winter bedding. Complaints have been received about the poor condition of the flower beds in this area.

ACTION

1. That winter bedding at Princes Green be included in the tender document for a grounds maintenance contract for 2016/2017.

RECOMMENDED

1. **That Cowes Town Council provides winter bedding at Princes Green.**
2. **That the Town Clerk obtains three quotations from contractors for winter bedding at Princes Green.**
3. **That the Town Clerk is authorised to spend up to £600 for winter bedding at Princes Green.**

c) Moorgreen Road Allotment Society

A group of Councillors met with representatives of Moorgreen Allotment Society to discuss the future of grounds maintenance work in this area. Currently the Society has a licence from the IW Council to occupy the site and they are responsible for managing the grounds of the reservoir and opening and closing the gateway, currently undertaken by volunteers. It is expected that the IW Council will break service on the licence in the near future. Cowes Town Council suggested that the Moorgreen Reservoir site could be included in the forthcoming tender process; volunteers from the Allotment Society would continue to open and lock the gates. As this is a public space there may be an opportunity to develop new projects in the future.

ACTION

1. That the Moorgreen Reservoir site be included in the tender document for a grounds maintenance contract for 2016/2017.
2. That any ideas for new projects at the site be put before Cowes Town Council's Projects Committee.

d) IW Council Scrutiny Committee - Review of Transfer of Services

The IW Council Scrutiny Committee met on 30 July 2015 and considered a number of recommendations in respect of transfer of services to town and parish councils. The contents of the review is received and noted.

e) Grounds Maintenance 2016 / 2017

Specifications for all the grounds in Cowes have been received i.e. Northwood Recreation Ground, Arctic Park, St Mary's Park, Moorgreen Reservoir, Mornington Green, Park Road Rose Bed & the Parade Bandstand. This enables a tendering process to start for a grounds maintenance contract for 2016 / 2017. A suitable contractor will be responsible for the maintenance and management of the sites and will be required to adopt a flexible approach when reviewing the condition of the grounds and whether work is needed depending on weather conditions during the year. Cowes Town Council will ask Northwood House for their grounds specifications so that they can be included in the tender document. Gurnard & Northwood Parish Councils will be invited to add their grounds maintenance specifications to the tender document.

ACTION

1. That Cowes Town Council ask Northwood House Charitable Trust Co. Ltd for their grounds specification to add to the tender process.
2. That Cowes Town Council ask Gurnard & Northwood Parish Councils whether they would like their grounds specifications added to the tender document.
3. That Cowes Town Council combines all specifications and advertises the tender for a grounds maintenance contract for 2016/2017.

13 STAFFING

- a) No staffing matters had been raised by Councillors.

The proceedings terminated at 7.15pm

CHAIRMAN